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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Answer us when we call, O God, and bless our Nation.

May our lawmakers work to do Your will, remembering that You have set apart the Godly for yourself. Inspire our Senators to find refuge in You and to discover blessings and joy in Your favor.

Lord, continue to supply our needs according to Your riches in glory, encouraging us to learn contentment by trusting the unfolding of Your loving providence. Keep us from stumbling or slipping as we find safety by walking with integrity.

Eternal God, to Your precious Name we ascribe glory, majesty and might, dominion and power, now and always. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PAUL). The majority leader is recognized.

KENTUCKY FLOODING

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, this morning we are all thinking of the many Kentuckians who have been impacted by severe flooding over the past couple of days. Eastern Kentucky has

been especially hard hit. Governor Beshear has declared a state of emergency, and the Kentucky delegation stands ready to assist in this effort.

The tragic flooding has already claimed two lives in Johnson County. Six remain missing. Others were forced to watch as homes and cherished memories were swept away. We can only imagine what these Kentuckians and their families must be going through.

This has been an especially trying task for our first responders as well. They have had to battle against debris and downed power lines. They have worked to rescue Kentuckians from trees. It hasn't been easy, but it reminds us again of why we owe these men and women so very much. I join Kentuckians in thanking them for all they have done and all they continue to do.

NUCLEAR AGREEMENT WITH IRAN

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, on an entirely different matter, I said yesterday the Senate would thoroughly review the White House deal with Iran. I said we would hold hearings and we would call witnesses and ultimately vote to approve or disapprove the deal in accordance with the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act. That is what we have long planned to do, and once the administration fully transmits the text, that is just what we will do.

Senators are already taking a close look at what they have been able to get their hands on thus far, but the Senate eagerly awaits the full transmission of that text and the required certifications. We await the beginning of a comprehensive review process premised on a simple question: Can the agreement meet its essential test of leaving our country and our allies safer?

EVERY CHILD ACHIEVES ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Finally, Mr. President, turning to the business currently

before the Senate, the bipartisan education debate we are having in the new Senate is good for our country and it was long overdue.

For too long, bureaucrats in Washington tried to dictate top-down, one-size-fits-all education policies to millions of students and families across our country. It was hurting our kids, and it needed to change. So a new Senate that is back to work for the American people decided to work together to do something about it. We thought it was past time to place more education decisionmaking power where it truly belongs—with parents, with teachers, with States, and with school boards, not with a distant Federal bureaucracy.

The pundits said Washington could never address these challenges, but the bipartisan Every Child Achieves Act actually received unanimous support from every Democrat and every Republican in committee. Just think about that for a moment. It is an impressive achievement, and it wouldn't have been possible without a functioning Senate and a lot of dedication and determination from the bill's primary sponsors, the Republican Senator from Tennessee and the Democratic Senator from Washington.

This debate may be years overdue, but Republicans and Democrats are certainly having their voices heard today. They are working across the aisle, they are representing the views of their constituents, and they are offering amendments. The new Senate has processed over two dozen amendments to this bill already, and we have adopted quite a few of them. In fact, we have now taken more rollcall amendment votes this year in the new Congress than throughout the entirety of the last Congress combined. That is an achievement both parties can celebrate. It represents progress for our country. And this afternoon we have a chance to make more because, with cooperation from our friends across the

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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